

# FABIAN QUARTERLY

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No 46

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## ARTICLES IN THIS ISSUE

	Page
<b>WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS IN FACTORY</b>	
WELFARE - - - by Mary Sur	3
<b>THE INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF THE</b>	
FILM - - - by Sinclair Road	11
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS</b>	
by Peter Self	20

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## CONTENTS

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## EDITORIAL

Since the last number of *Fabian Quarterly* appeared the European war has come to an end and a General Election has been fought, though not decided. These two events mark the end of one period in the life and work of the Fabian Society and open a new era, which we hope will be equally successful and less beset by technical difficulties.

The achievements of the Fabian Society in wartime have, despite all hindrances, been tremendous. There is scarcely one peacetime activity of the present Society and its offspring the N F R B, which has not been maintained and developed since the two bodies amalgamated early in 1939. We have every encouragement to face our future tasks with confidence even though, until the result of the election is known, we cannot be certain exactly what rôle the Society will be called upon to play.

A new period is opening for *Fabian Quarterly* too. The Society's 'house-journal' has suffered a great deal from the paper shortage, the pressure of war work upon its unpaid contributors, and inevitable changes of editor. It has not always been easy to maintain the high standard to which we aspire, and we cannot measure our debt to those contributors whose energy and punctuality have kept the standard flying.

From now on we intend to plan the contents of the *Quarterly* with greater care, in the belief that, as a periodical, it has a distinctive function to perform. Much of the Society's work, which is too slight and too topical for publication as research pamphlets, will appear in these pages. Articles on different aspects of Fabian research will occasionally be included. Subjects which merit serious treatment but are often neglected by other bodies or other sections of the Labour movement will receive special attention. New features will appear from time to time, and in this connection readers' comments and suggestions will be welcomed by the Editor. Above all, a serious attempt will be made to link the function of *Fabian Quarterly* with the research of the Society as a whole.

This issue, a transitional one, starts on the above lines. It was planned before VE-Day but, fortunately, has not been out-dated by later events. All the three main articles are the first contributions to Fabian literature of young, and comparatively little-known people, and each subject is one which, in our view, has received insufficient attention elsewhere in recent times. The first, on factory welfare, has emanated from a research group studying wider problems of labour management. The second is a paper now under consideration by a small group on films. The last is a totally independent contribution, but the herald of further work, already in progress, on the battling problems of local democracy and finance.

All the articles contain a speculative note. We invite your criticism and will publish useful correspondence whenever the paper situation permits.

An apology—for the slight delay in publication.

A bouquet—for the printers, who have made every effort to produce this and our many pre-election pamphlets in good time.

# WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS IN FACTORY WELFARE

by Mary Sur

The word 'welfare' in this article is interpreted in the widest sense. It is perhaps symptomatic of the transitional stage through which industrial organisation is passing at the present time that it should be necessary to make this statement. Controversy in recent years has raged round the use of the word 'welfare', and though, during the war, it has been more widely used than ever before in official documents, in industry there is a strong group which considers the word has serious limitations and that with the development in the technique of labour management, the title labour manager or personnel manager should supersede that of welfare officer, or the latter should be relegated to a lesser place within the hierarchy of industry. Nevertheless, the fact remains that people performing identical functions in different firms in posts of high responsibility may be variously designated welfare officer, labour manager, personnel officer. Personnel manager is perhaps the title which holds the field at the moment, but it is not as yet a title fully understood by the mass of employees in factories. However, the titular controversy is of little importance in itself, except in so far as it indicates a stage of growth, and consciousness of increased responsibility among those entering the profession. Since welfare may be said to start from the moment the applicant for a job enters the factory, going through the process of selection, placement and introduction to the job, as well as when he is on the job, it is not possible to speak of the welfare of the worker without including all aspects of employment organisation, and factory relationships.

In attempting to assess wartime developments in factory welfare one is faced with conflicting views and claims. Trade unionists say that production did not begin to improve until pressure from organised labour made itself felt, that better production depended upon improved working conditions, and that these only came about after incessant demand from below. Bevin, brought into the Ministry of Labour after the collapse of France, to get the wheels of industry oiled and running smoothly at top speed, has claimed that the advances made are largely the work of his Ministry and the joint consultative machinery established by him on the national level. The cynics would add that the improvements made show no conversion on the part of managements ; that they come out of E.P.T and will go with E.P.T.

If, as the above views would suggest, the advances made are but a wartime phenomenon, then, unless further powers are taken by the Ministry of Labour to direct the development of welfare in industry, it would appear that much of the progress made is ephemeral. In order to investigate this and make a true assessment, it is necessary to look at the position prior to the war.

## WELFARE BEFORE THE WAR

It may fairly be said that slow and steady progress had been made in industrial welfare since the 1914-18 war, although the slump of the nineteen-thirties caused a setback to the movement. During this period most of the

general principles of health, welfare, and good relationships in industry were known, or should have been known, as a result of the work of the Health of Munition Workers' Committee, of the Industrial Health Research Board, and of such voluntary bodies as the Industrial Welfare Society, the Institute of Labour Management, the National Institute of Industrial Psychology and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. Experiments in most directions had already been made by the more progressive firms ; for example, the establishment of medical and ancillary health services in industry, canteens, joint consultation, training and education programmes—even such amenities as ' music while you work ', though this is usually regarded as a purely wartime development. The Factories Act of 1937 illustrated the general improvement made in working conditions. It was able to make compulsory certain requirements in lighting, ventilation, safety and factory hygiene which had long been in force in the more progressive firms, and so brought the stragglers into line—a typical example of legal consolidation of developments due to voluntary initiative on the part of the more enlightened section of the community.

But withal the advance was slow. This is illustrated only too well by a comparison of the numbers of welfare officers employed in industry with the total number of factories. According to the Factory Inspector's Report for 1943 there were at the beginning of the war only 1,500 welfare officers in industry, although the number of factories was 238,000 (not counting docks, warehouses, and building construction). On the health side in 1921 the Industrial Welfare Society was able to find only 20 doctors in industry to invite to a conference. This number increased slowly to 300 in 1939, only 50 of whom were in fulltime appointments.

The unwillingness of many managements to bring their organisation into line with modern views on efficiency and the importance of the human element in industry was originally reinforced to a considerable extent by the trade union attitude of suspicion towards welfare work. In 1932 the T U C made an enquiry into the effects of welfare work in industry and circulated to their affiliated bodies a survey of the results, which showed that many trade unionists suspected that ' welfare ' would undermine the influence of the trade unions and operate against increased membership. Health services, which included the very necessary pre-placement medical examination, were suspected of excluding those not medically A1, and so of operating unfairly against applicants. This was a very understandable fear at a time of widespread unemployment, but it certainly put a brake on advance on the health side.

Alongside the slow development of care for the health, welfare and safety of factory workers, the advance in the technique of personnel management in the U S A was beginning to have effect upon industry in this country. Although it may be said that excessive zeal for improved technique—a passion for record keeping and analysis—leads too frequently to neglect of the human considerations upon which all welfare and personnel work must primarily be based; and although there are a few cases where the personnel office has become a distant technical department, as far removed from the individual worker as the production and planning department; it is also true that in this country concentration on the improvement of amenities and physical working conditions had led to disregard of the more deep-rooted causes of much inefficiency and discontent, which can only be discovered by a study of relationships, careful recording and analysis. However, the balance had begun to be redressed before the war.

## WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS

What happened at the outbreak of war ? Inevitably working conditions deteriorated on account of emergency measures, blackout, long hours, and,

in many cases, the effects of evacuation and dislocation of family life. Then, during the period of the 'phoney war', everything seemed to hang fire. It had been anticipated that there would be a greatly increased demand for welfare officers, and yet this did not materialise, with the result that many of the better candidates for these posts drifted off into the Services and were lost to industry. Representations were made by the voluntary bodies to the Ministry of Labour that a special emergency training course for welfare officers should be started, but nothing came of this until after the fall of France and the change of Government. Then Bevin as Minister of Labour began to stress the need for welfare work in industry. The word 'welfare' now appeared in many official documents. The Ministry of Labour appointed Outside Welfare Officers to handle the problems of transferred workers; the Factories (Medical and Welfare) Order gave the Chief Inspector of Factories power to insist upon the appointment of doctors, nurses or welfare officers in any factory on war work where he deemed it necessary. This change of official attitude, however, followed on a spontaneous demand from the rank and file in industry, who, dissatisfied with the ineffectiveness of the war policy and the inefficiencies of production, deduced a lack of determination in high quarters to go all out to crush the fascist monster in Europe. This led to a revival and strengthening of the Shop Steward movement, culminating in a great national meeting in London, despite the disapproval of Transport House. This was followed by a change at headquarters and the big unions 'adopted' the shop stewards' policy and began demanding joint consultation, improvements in working conditions and the appointment of doctors and welfare officers in industry. They had still no full appreciation of the stage to which welfare and personnel work had developed in the more progressive firms, but they had ceased to regard themselves solely as the custodians of hours and wages. Bevin now led the demand from both the trade union and the Government quarters, and later he was backed by Cripps who, as Minister of Aircraft Production, took a strong line with aircraft firms. The latter has shown a real appreciation of the place of personnel management in modern industry and established within his Ministry a Production and Efficiency Board, with the main task of educating aircraft firms in personnel management. The Ministry of Supply, from the early days of the war, found it necessary to put in medical and welfare supervision in the Royal Ordnance Factories, and as the largest direct employer of labour in the country developed a central direction of labour management, medical services and training. The Ministry of Labour now sponsored emergency training courses in welfare and personnel management, and these actually started in September 1941, that is two years after the outbreak of war. The courses were for three months, of which one month consisted of practical training (in comparison with the two-year social science course which was the normal entrance to the profession). The courses were run by four university social science departments, and the students received a subsistence allowance from the Ministry of Labour. Applications to take this course were very numerous. In the end the courses, which finished in 1944, trained about 800 men and women.

In the meantime, although industry as a whole was showing more appreciation of the need for appointing properly trained or experienced officers, there were many appointments of persons with no previous industrial experience who regarded themselves as happily designed by nature for industrial welfare work and were quite oblivious of its true meaning and the development of its technique. Such appointments were most unfortunate because they not only gave the employees a poor opinion of welfare work but confirmed the employers in their previous impression that all this fuss was unnecessary and that they need only pay lip service to the wartime insistence of a trade union Minister.

### THE WELFARE AND PERSONNEL OFFICER

What are the wartime advances in the welfare field and are they likely to outlast the war? Firstly it may be said that welfare and personnel management has now been widely recognised as a functional necessity of good management organisation; its scope has been extended and its technique developed. There is now a wider acceptance than ever before of the importance of the part played by the welfare and personnel officer, but coupled with this, in more advanced quarters, a growing realisation that all executives should understand and carry out the personnel policy of the firm. There is also more appreciation of the need for officers specially trained not only in the industrial and legal background but in industrial psychology and in the technique of personnel management. Moreover, the success of new methods of selection and training in the Services, coupled with the problem, already upon us, of retraining and refitting service men and women back into industry, are making industrialists more aware of the newer techniques for which the industrial psychologists have so long fought: vocational guidance, proper methods of selection, job analysis and evaluation, and merit grading of individuals so that job and worker may be satisfactorily married. This awareness is still very limited. There is much ground still to be covered but a beginning has been made. It may be taken as a pointer for the future that the Ministry of Labour have recently set up a committee to consider methods of selection and placement. Undoubtedly the interest in these questions is not merely a wartime phenomenon. They are of vital concern if reinstatement is to run smoothly and if full employment is to be secured.

The number of welfare and personnel officers in industry has increased during the war from about 1,500 to 5,478 employed in 3,395 factories according to the 1943 Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories. To compare this with the number of factories already quoted is to indicate the amount of work still to be done. The war has certainly accelerated the rate of these appointments, but there is no doubt that the wartime development is along the lines of previous trends. The Ministry of Labour is planning to subsidise courses of training for suitable individuals on release from the forces, and a number of welfare officers with valuable experience who will no longer be required in war factories now closing down will also be available in the immediate future. Therefore it is to be hoped that the appointment of trained and experienced men and women will become an accepted policy.

It may well be asked how many of the wartime appointments are permanent and how many ephemeral. Certainly some were made under pressure and others are unsatisfactory, but the great majority have proved their value. Pressure of circumstances alone—the continuation of many restrictions, the problems of reinstatement, the urgent need for more training and general education in industry if the efficiency of production is to be maintained and the best are made of the dwindling number of juveniles entering the labour market—all these make imperative the concentration in the hands of one trained official of the supervision of welfare and employment policy. Therefore it seems unlikely that the advances made in this direction will be lost after the war. The main problem is in the small units which still constitute the great majority of factories. In 1936 when the last figures were available factories employing less than 250 constituted 97% of the total, and 52% of the industrial population were employed in these small units. One encouraging sign is that an increasing number in this group are now putting their houses in order and appointing welfare officers, although the small employer is only too ready to argue that he cannot afford to engage a properly trained person for the job. But there is no doubt that many small firms are now showing a real interest in, and desire for, knowledge of the principles of industrial welfare, and this cannot be entirely transitory.

There is a school of thought which argues that welfare and personnel officers should occupy an independent position in industry, that they should be appointed by the state, though paid by the firm, thus making them free of any criticism that they are master's men. With the present ownership of industry, this seems an impracticable suggestion. It would be possible to have medical advisers to industry appointed by the state, since their profession is in any case independent of industry, but a welfare or personnel officer is intimately responsible for the carrying out of a policy laid down by each individual concern. He can, and very frequently does, through his knowledge and experience, influence that policy to a very great extent, but if he were appointed by the state he would be reduced to the position of an inspector with very limited powers, unless the Government were to extend welfare legislation considerably. He would have more difficulty in winning the confidence of the management, and no scope for experiment and adaptation. There would be tremendous resistance from management to an appointment imposed from outside for the running of what is at present in each firm its own individual personnel organisation. In socialised industry the case would be quite otherwise, and it is of interest to note that a group of the Fabian Society is at present investigating this very question. What form should personnel management take in socialised industry; should this rest, as at present, in the hands of a separate profession, or should it become a function of trade unionism; should the chief shop steward become in fact personnel manager, or should selection, engagement and employment organisation be divorced from the welfare side? There is at least one firm where the chief shop steward has been appointed personnel manager, but industry as a whole is not ripe for such a step under the present system.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

On the physical side of working environment there have been improvements in certain directions, mainly since 1941, but these are offset by deterioration in many factories. Lighting in particular has been improved by the greatly extended use of fluorescent tubes. Ventilation has, perforce, called for much attention, but not always with success. Heating has not been as good as it should have been, largely owing to shortage of fuel and equipment. Once equipment is available great advances could be made, but cost will be the limiting factor. There is no doubt that paying for improvements out of E P T was a great encouragement during the war.

One of the greatest wartime developments has been the extension of industrial canteens and the provision of meals containing extra rations at a low price. This became vital to the country's food policy, and industrial canteens now number nearly 11,000, the most striking increase being among small firms. The quality of the food and service has on the whole very much improved since the beginning of the war, though many still require to be brought into line in this respect. There is no doubt that as long as the scarcity of food continues the industrial canteen will be as necessary as ever. Whether it continues after that period depends partly on local circumstances—whether workers can get home for meals—and partly on whether community feeding has now become a deep-rooted habit. The standard of catering will have to be maintained on a high level if the industrial canteen is to continue to attract customers. In recent years the canteen has in the great majority of cases been heavily subsidised by the firm. It is doubtful whether firms will be prepared to continue such subsidies if the cost of food remains high, once food supplies improve. Nutritionally there is no doubt of the superiority of the good canteen meal over the bun or sandwich, or the rushed meal at home.

There has been a considerable advance during the war in health supervision, but owing to the scarcity of doctors and the demands of the Services, quite a number of firms willing to make appointments have not been able to do so. The number of doctors in industry according to the latest Ministry of Labour figures are 174 in fulltime appointments and 744 attending part-time in 1,150 factories (more than double the peacetime figure), excluding the official Examining Surgeons for juveniles and other workers who come under special Regulations. The number of nurses is about 8,000.

Present indications are that a good many more appointments of medical officers will be made once candidates become available from the Services. Certainly, where wartime appointments have been made they will continue, for the services of a works medical officer have proved too valuable to be lightly abandoned, unless a thorough national health service is put into operation. A good omen for the future is the present trade union encouragement of medical services in the factory, and the demand from workers that joint committees should discuss health problems. There is still, however, a good deal of misunderstanding among the rank and file of the position of the works doctor *vis-à-vis* the panel doctor, and this leads to complaints that the works doctor will not treat patients, but passes them on to the panel doctor. Yet where it is a question of home treatment, rather than preventive or emergency treatment, this is what the works doctor is professionally bound to do. It is not sufficiently realised that the task of the works doctor is mainly preventive.

The problem of health supervision in the small firm will remain and can only be met by group schemes, similar to that which has developed among the firms in the Cray Valley during the war, where a central clinic caters for 12 firms employing about 1,200 workers within a radius of two or three miles. There is no reason why the much discussed health centre should not have on its staff a specially trained industrial consultant (one of the difficulties at the present time is the lack of post graduate courses for those wishing to specialise in industrial medicine) whose services would cover visits to all the small firms in the area on the payment of an appropriate fee to the centre.

The placing of women in men's jobs has meant an increase in the use of mechanical lifting and carrying devices and therefore the elimination of much irksome manual labour. Still, much more can be done in this direction provided unemployment does not make labour a cheaper commodity than machines. On the other hand, the breakdown of jobs has increased repetitive work and underlined the necessity for attention to the problem of monotony. Long hours and the great strain of war work have already forced attention to it, and though the principal remedy must now be a reduction of hours (without a reduction of normal earnings), wartime experience has given a valuable lead in methods of reducing the effects of monotony and in creating job interest—the use of music at work (if carefully selected), colour in the workshops, recreation during the lunch hour, and so on. Music at work has undoubtedly come to stay, and the very great success of C E M A concerts in industry has been the clearest indication of the need for the relaxation afforded by listening to good music and the possibilities of developing cultural interests among great masses of the industrial population.

## JOINT CONSULTATION

There is not space in this article to go fully into methods of creating job interest, but obviously the most effective method is through cooperative effort. The development of joint consultation in industry has probably been the most important contribution of the war years to the future of industry. Works Councils had existed before in many firms, but now, out of the demands of

the shop stewards, grew the J P C, and for the first time the workers were given an opportunity of discussing production matters. The experiment was certainly not a hundred per cent. successful, but in surveying the whole field of industry that is not the important point. Effective joint consultation—democracy in industry—is but in its infancy, but the J P C marks a turning point, particularly since it had the wholehearted support of the trade unions. It is difficult to get an idea of the numbers of joint committees actually operating in industry. According to the A E U there were over 4,000 J P Cs in 1944, but it is possible that many of these were little more than paper schemes. The A E U has reported enthusiastically on their achievements and there is no doubt that some have proved of great value, both from the point of view of production and of relationship, but on the whole it is more correct to say that achievements have been limited on the production side, and that too much was expected of the J P C, at least from the worker's side. This is the conclusion reached after a special survey of all types of joint committees made by the Industrial Welfare Society.<sup>1</sup> The most striking fact that emerged from the survey was the great variety of forms which joint consultation took in industry. There was no uniformity either in constitution or practice, even many of the J P Cs being variants on the agreed constitution, but failure or success always depended on the scope of the committee and the degree of interest shown by the management.

'Where has the J P C been most effective? Broadly speaking, in the following circumstances: (a) In engineering works (i) where there are many skilled workers, and (ii) where constant changes in Government contracts have made alterations and adaptation in production methods necessary, or caused variation in the numbers employed, or movement of personnel from one job to another has been called for. In such works there is constant need for pooling all the brains on the job and for explaining the frequent changes and cooperating in seeing them put through smoothly; (b) where the idea of the J P C has been broadened and the constitution so adapted that the scope includes health, welfare, education, training and ordinary domestic factory matters. . . . It cannot be too strongly stressed that the wider the scope of the committee, the greater the chance of making it a successful part of cooperative machinery.'

Certain factors in the present situation make it vital that joint consultation should be retained and developed in post-war industry, and many firms are aware of this. Firstly in the Forces many employees will have learnt through A B C A how to discuss and pool their ideas: secondly the problems of reinstatement are going to be so difficult that unless the active cooperation of employees is enlisted, there is little chance of making the official machinery work smoothly.

One of the difficulties in the working of joint committees during the war has been to coordinate the work of existing committees with the newer J P C, particularly since membership of the latter was by agreement limited to trade union members, whereas other committees had no such limitation. This caused trouble in quite a number of firms, where only a small percentage of workers were members of the unions, and refused to serve beside non-union members. Although, obviously, the agreement could only be made to bind organised workers, many managements felt it was undemocratic to refuse to allow other workers to stand for the committees, when they formed the majority in the factory. A few enlightened firms took the opportunity to press for a wider membership of unions among their workers. Future develop-

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<sup>1</sup> See article "Joint Consultation" in 'Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management,' Sept./Oct., 1944.

ments depend to a large extent upon the attitude of the trade unions. The JPC agreement is dated to terminate with the end of hostilities, but it is apparent that a new agreement will be demanded. The trade union attitude now is that, provided full employment can be maintained, they are vitally interested in improving the standard of production as well as working conditions by the pooling of ideas through joint committees, but that if unemployment should again rear its head, then they could not expect their members to press for improvements which might put them out of a job. For the successful development of committee work, further powers should be given to committees. They should not be considered as mere talking shops ; their advice should be sought and acted upon. There are many firms thoroughly aware of the value of active cooperation, but the majority have still far to go in this respect, and continued pressure will be necessary if joint consultation is to develop as it should into a valuable weapon of reconstruction.

Finally, the war years have some lessons to teach in the direction of education and training, which should play an even more important part in industrial welfare in the future. It has been proved that workers can be trained to semi-skilled jobs in a much shorter time than was commonly supposed ; that even skilled jobs do not always need the lengthy training involved in the system of apprenticeship ; and that, despite the increasing number of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs—or rather on account of it—the skilled worker is more important than ever before, and that a good supervisor requires not only technical skill but the ability to handle men and women. Thus the future skilled worker and the supervisor need careful training, with much more stress on the wider aspects of their job. Another factor in the situation—though not due to the war—is the future shortage of juveniles. All these considerations are bringing home to industry the necessity of education and training, and one of the most encouraging signs for the welfare of future entrants to industry is the fact that industry is not waiting passively for the introduction of the County College and the raising of the school-leaving age, but is considering what can be done now to improve educational facilities for their juveniles. In the last year there have been quite a number of appointments of Education Officers in industry with the task of organising wider education as well as vocational training.

To sum up it may be said that the war has brought quite a number of material improvements in working conditions, but, more important, it has broken down resistance to modern ideas on the development of industrial welfare and personnel management. The way is now open for great advances in all the directions discussed above, but, as in all questions of reconstruction, their achievement will ultimately depend on the maintenance of full employment.

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# THE INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF THE FILM

by Sinclair Road

The film is one of the most powerful and effective means of communication. Although it cannot reach people in their own homes like the wireless, and does not have the same permanence as the printed word, it can convey immediately realisable impressions and show clearly and vividly in one picture what would otherwise require many words to explain. Moreover, it can be certain of holding its audience, which cannot easily escape by turning a dial or skipping a page. As a means of entertainment it has enjoyed an increasing popularity; by 1939 it was estimated that 235 million attendances were recorded regularly each week in the cinemas of the world. There was also a growing audience outside the cinemas. With this power and popularity the film was in a position to exert a very positive effect on developments between the two wars, but in practice this effect was small. Nevertheless, certain things have been achieved, particularly during the war, and they suggest what the film might now be able to do. It can supplement the other and more traditional media of communication, particularly books and periodicals, which parts of Europe may well be starved of for some time. In the same way as it provided instruction for millions of soldiers in the different techniques of modern warfare, it can give quick and extensive instruction in the processes and techniques required in the physical rebuilding of Europe. It can be the instrument for the rapid exchange between countries of the news and information which is essential to the avoidance of international misunderstandings.

The use of the film by international bodies before the war was very limited. The League had a film department in its Information section, but rarely employed films, mainly because there was no clear idea of the medium itself nor of the possible channels of distribution. The I.L.O. commissioned a memorandum from the documentary film makers in Britain to explain how films could be used in its work. But this was in 1938 and already too late for anything to be done. The International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation produced a book on the "Intellectual Rôle of the Cinema" in 1937 as part of a series on the modern media of mass-communication—film, press and radio. In 1928 the League recognised the International Institute of Educational Cinematography at Rome as one of its organs. But this body came to an end in 1937, when Italy left the League, with few achievements to its credit, apart from a convention for facilitating the duty free exchange of educational films.

The film industries in the major producing countries were preoccupied mainly with the entertainment film and the profits it could make; other countries to them were merely markets. Russia, Germany and Italy, with state-controlled industries, were fully aware of the film's propaganda value. Lenin called the cinema 'the most important of all the arts' and from 1918 onwards it was an important instrument of Russian home policy. The Germans since 1933 used the film as a means of cultural penetration, and it would be interesting to trace the part it played in undermining neighbouring countries before and during the war. Profit, indirect advertisement, destructive propaganda; these therefore were the main motives behind much of the foreign distribution of films pre-1939. At the same time these motives raised barriers against the distribution of films. Apart from a general import duty on films, most European countries introduced various measures limiting the entry of foreign films, in order to assist their home

production industries. Educational films, on the other hand, could be introduced duty-free under the League Convention of 1933, but as only two or three of the main film-producing countries were signatories, it was of little material assistance. The only really encouraging development was documentary filmmaking. Although there was only a very limited exchange of documentary films before the war, the work of documentary producers in various countries, particularly in Britain, formed the basis for the wartime film activities of the Ministry of Information, the Canadian National Film Board, and the American Office of War Information which have achieved an extensive interchange of instructional and information films.

The feature entertainment film and the documentary educational film are the two main categories under which the international rôle of the film can best be considered. The one is important on account of its volume and world-wide circulation, the other by reason of its subject-matter and approach. It is hardly possible, however, to do full justice to either in so short a space as this.

### THE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

The majority of the films produced and exhibited in public cinemas before the war were feature entertainment films. In as far as they describe the people and life of the country in which they were produced, or reflect its outlook and manners, feature films can make an important international contribution. The number of such films produced over the last 25 years has been enormous, but few of them have given a faithful picture of their country. In 1939 over 2,000 were produced all over the world.<sup>1</sup> But a quarter of these were American and propagated a wholly artificial Hollywood outlook on life, and this quarter occupied 65% of the world's screen time. The balance of exchange, quantitatively and financially, has therefore been very lopsided. In 1938, for example, 545 feature films were produced in the U.S.A.; these constituted the bulk of the 463 foreign films shown in Britain; 147 of them were distributed in France, 174 in Denmark and 206 in Bulgaria. In reverse it is a very different picture: only 39 of the 78 British films produced in 1938, 28 of the 116 French films, 16 of the 51 Russian films were distributed in America. Moreover, only 12 British films were shown in France, 8 in Denmark, and 21 in Bulgaria.

The American film industry achieved its position of world domination in the first instance as a result of the virtual cessation of production in Europe during the 1914-18 war. The subsequent impoverishment of most European countries prevented the renewed capitalisation of home film production on a sufficiently large scale to recover lost markets. In fact, many European film companies found it simpler and more profitable to import American films than to produce their own. Secondly, the American industry has always had to cater for a cosmopolitan audience within its own frontiers, and has had to avoid stressing any one national characteristic unduly. Finally, it has had an enormous home market. In 1939, 85 million of the world total of 235 million weekly cinema attendances were recorded in the U.S.A. alone.

The production of a feature film is a very expensive undertaking; it can cost anything from £15,000 for the most meagre to £1 million or over. The American producer has been in the unique position of being able to recover the costs and make a profit even on his £½ million 'super' films in the home market alone. This gives him a tremendous advantage in competing for overseas markets because he can afford to spend more money on publicity, technical perfection and lavishness of production. No other country is in the same position. In Britain, which has the next largest cinema attendance a producer

<sup>1</sup> 562 in Europe, 483 in the U.S.A., 131 in Latin America, 1045 in the Far East (500 of these in Japan), making a total of 2,151. *Film Facts*, 1939, issued by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America.

can barely recover at home the cost of a really expensive production; he must obtain distribution abroad. If he tries to achieve it, he finds American films, better publicised, their distribution better organised, there before him. This is the case with all the film-producing countries, and the smaller the home market the more the producer is forced to concentrate on making cheaper films, with increasingly less chance of getting distribution in other countries in competition with technically superior American films. The introduction of sound at the end of the twenties made the situation even more difficult for the smaller countries. In the age of the silent film Sweden and Denmark, for example, had flourishing film industries. There was no language barrier and their films circulated fairly widely in Scandinavia and Germany. But the introduction of sound immediately put a heavy drag on producers in countries belonging to small language groups. At the same time it encouraged the rise of national schools in larger countries like France and Germany. The reply of Hollywood, which was quick to recognise genius, was to "tempt producers and stars to America, while denying access to their native films, except as an occasional curiosity."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, although these national schools produced a number of first-class films, particularly the French, they did not make them in sufficient quantity to reduce the exhibitors' dependence on Hollywood. Quantity has always been the American industry's trump-card. Exhibitors in any country must have enough films to show in their cinemas, and a large and regular supply of films is inevitably of more importance to them than the origin of the films they handle. This dependence of foreign exhibitors on its products helped the American industry to overcome the sound difficulty. Production subsidiaries were set up in the main European countries, and films were made in the native language and in English, the English version being exported to the U.S.A. Dubbed versions of the films produced in America were also prepared, that is with a re-recorded sound track in the principle languages. In this way Hollywood continued to dominate the world's screens.<sup>2</sup> Most European countries introduced in the 'thirties various measures to protect the home industry by restricting the entry of foreign films, particularly American. These measures undoubtedly assisted home production in some cases, but at the same time this had a further restrictive effect on the general exchange of films between countries. In this country for example after the 1927 Quota Act, which required both distributors and exhibitors to handle a rising quota of British films, no distributor was anxious to saddle himself with a foreign film unlikely to make a profit. This was the case with all but American films; all other films presented the language problem, few were dubbed, most were captioned. English audiences in particular have never liked, or have been conditioned to dislike, captioned or dubbed films.

There are two principal exceptions to American domination in Europe<sup>3</sup>, Russia and Germany since 1933. Within Europe the influence of the German industry increased since 1933; from 1940 all European film production was centralised under German control. Although the French and Italian studios continued to produce, the bulk of the films shown in the cinemas of Europe during the war were German.

Since 1918 Russia has been largely closed to the world's films. Scarcely any foreign films were introduced into the country before the war. All were

<sup>1</sup> *The Film in National Life*. Report of the Commission on Educational and Cultural Films, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> The involved financial interlocking between the major American film corporations and film companies in other countries is a problem on its own. See *The Money Behind the Screen*, by S. Legg and F. D. Klungender, 1934, etc.

<sup>3</sup> In the Far East, Japan has been an important exception; its annual production of films pre-war was higher than any other country. Little information is available about the distribution achieved.

subject to rigid censorship. Censorship similarly operated against the exhibition of Russian films abroad. In Britain the masterpieces of the Russian cinema, ' Battleship Potemkin ', ' October ', were eventually shown, but only in specialist cinemas and Film Societies. In the U.S.A. in the years before the war some 15 or 16 Russian films were imported each year. Thanks to the greatly increased interest in the U.S.S.R. during the war more Russian films have been shown in Britain and the U.S.A. In this country one film, ' dubbed ' into English, actually achieved commercial distribution, the feature-length film ' In the Rear of the Enemy ', which was shown in 1300 cinemas in Britain. But otherwise the commercial showing of Russian films has largely been restricted to one cinema in London, the Tatler. British and Russian feature films have also been shown in Russian cinemas; ' In Which We Serve ' and ' Proud Valley ', and Hollywood's ' Mission to Moscow ' were particularly successful.

But despite the slight wartime improvement there is still no fair and regular exchange of feature films between countries. Nevertheless, it is essential for this country or any country to be adequately represented by feature films at home and abroad. But the problem of distribution is indivisible from that of production. The choice before a producer has in the past been a perplexing one. Given adequate State protection, involving limitation of the number of American films imported, he can concentrate on trying to make films as cheaply as possible solely for the home market. The French producers, for example, did this very successfully; working with great care and economy they succeeded in producing their well-known masterpieces for comparatively little money. The other alternative is to try and produce super films on the Hollywood pattern in an attempt to gain overseas distribution, and with the ultimate hope of building up the home industry in terms of capital and reputation to rival the American. This appears to be the present policy of the Rank organisation in this country where, moreover, the beginnings of a British school of feature-film making have for the first time been evident during the war in such films as ' The Way Ahead ', ' Millions Like Us ', ' In Which We Serve ', etc. But for films to have a character of their own and quality is not enough to assure them distribution in competition with Hollywood. A solution to the problem is hedged in with political and economic considerations. The American industry reaps such a rich harvest in film rentals from foreign markets. In 1939, 135 million dollars, 35% of the producing branches' total revenue came from the hire of American films abroad.

It is perhaps demanding too much of Governments and national film industries to realise that it is not only financially desirable to distribute home produced films in other countries, but also culturally and socially of the utmost importance to reflect the national scene abroad. To achieve this each country should be prepared to give every encouragement to the distribution through its own cinemas of feature films produced in a number of other countries and not just one. It is the social and cultural dependence on the questionable products of a single country which is so undesirable. Although there are notable exceptions, the bulk of American films represent not an American, but a Hollywood outlook on life. This outlook on life offers an escape from personal disappointment and dissatisfaction, from world depressions and crises, into a world of cheap thrills and vulgar achievements. It has been as harmful to peoples outside America, as it has been to Americans themselves. The millions of American soldiers in Britain and in Europe over the past 3 years must have suffered a great deal from the false picture of America and themselves which is current abroad. The difficulties which weigh against any solution of the problem are enormous. But if the world's most popular source of entertainment, which also happens to be one of the most potent media of communication, is to be as beneficial as possible in its effect on people's minds, the need for the

free and regular interchange of feature films between countries must be kept uppermost. This would appear to be the only way to break not merely the cultural dependence on Hollywood, but also the economic stranglehold by which this enormous industry perpetuates its cultural domination.

The portrayal of news on the screen has been equally unsatisfactory. Newsreel companies in most countries are connected with the feature companies and pursue the same aim. Even the news must be entertaining before all else. In peace-time the items included in the newsreel were usually of purely parochial interest—the launching of ships, the laying of foundation stones, sporting events, with very occasional high spots. Since 1939 the events of the war have inevitably been uppermost, but treated for the most part in the same superficial way. Few newsreel editors have felt anything like the same responsibility to their public as the editors of the national dailies feel. There has been little attempt to present the news from all countries, nor to interpret it. During the war the British Council has circulated abroad a newsreel 'British News', made up of extracts from the British newsreels. The American Government has also distributed its own newsreels abroad. The first attempt at a newsreel issued by more than one country is the United Nations Information Organisation's newsreels, which contain information about the activities of the United Nations' fighting forces. But all these attempts are in the same tradition of news as entertainment.

The American 'March of Time' series has shown that there is a place for the interpretative news film. It has proved very successful, showing to over 12,000 cinemas in the U.S.A. and in other countries. The Canadian National Film Board's series 'World in Action' is very much of this pattern, with the like merit of presenting world news. It too circulates widely inside and outside Canada. When television is in extensive operation, some newsreel editors think that all newsreels will have to follow the March of Time pattern, because television will cover the main topical news items. But there is still a place for an internationally produced interpretative newsreel.

## THE DOCUMENTARY FILM

Feature films set out to entertain; they are designed to reach the maximum audience and make the maximum profit; their individual effect is usually quite indiscriminate. Documentary films on the other hand are not produced as money-making undertakings; they are sponsored by Government departments, by industry, by various national bodies, for particular educational purposes. Some are shown in the public cinemas, but their principal audience is a selected one outside and for this reason is called non-theatrical.

As developed by the movement which first created it in Britain in the thirties, the documentary film is functional in aim and use. It deals primarily with the workings of contemporary society, its problems of employment, health, education, etc., depicted realistically in terms of everyday life. It endeavours to communicate them to people in places where they are most likely to understand the implications of the problems, that is in schools, clubs, trade-union halls, and professional meetings. These problems are related and are common to all countries; full employment, standards of health, educational opportunities, etc., depend upon each other and in turn upon the fair and regular distribution of goods and services within and between countries. Moreover, these specialised audiences are also to be found in the majority of countries. Everywhere there are doctors and farmers and housewives and others who can be brought together on the basis of interest in the practice of their particular craft, trade or profession. The nature of the audiences aimed at and the subject matter of documentary films have therefore made them an important medium of international exchange.

In Britain the documentary film-makers formed an organised movement around John Grierson. Their work developed as part of the public relations activities of the Empire Marketing Board, the General Post Office and various industries. They had the advantage of being associated from the beginning with an official unit, first at the E M B, then at the G P O; the G P O Film Unit is now the Crown Film Unit of the Ministry of Information. There has therefore been a tradition of continuous Government film-making in this country since 1929.

Up to the war these and other independent units produced several hundred documentaries on health, education, industry, communications, etc., such as 'Enough to Eat', 'Housing Problems', 'Industrial Britain', 'Children at School', 'Cable Ship'. Whatever the sponsor, the documentary film-makers retained a sense of the social and educational importance of their work. Their films were shown mainly through the non-theatrical channels which they were the first to develop. Some of them were shown in other countries, chiefly in the U S A, and plans had been worked out in 1939 for a regular Anglo-American exchange.

In the U S A, in France, Holland and one or two other countries documentary films were also produced before the war, but they were the work of individual producers, and were very much fewer in number. Some of them were shown in specialised cinemas and Film Societies in this country, that is they had only the same small channels open to them, as were open to the average foreign language film pre-war.

But since 1939 there have been great developments in the production and distribution of documentaries and in their exchange. In the first place several Allied Governments found in it a valuable instrument for conveying information. In this country under the Films Division of the Ministry of Information, and to a lesser extent the British Council, the making of documentaries has been on an unprecedented scale. From September, 1939, to December, 1944, over 600 films were made under the auspices of the M O I, over 100 of these exclusively for overseas distribution, apart from a further 100 films commissioned by the British Council solely for showing abroad. M O I films have been produced regularly with commentaries in French, Chinese, Turkish, Persian, Castilian Spanish, Columbian Spanish (for Latin American countries), and Brazilian, and occasionally in Russian, Dutch, Flemish, Polish, Czech, Italian and Maltese.

This is the great advantage which the documentary film with commentary has over the feature film: that it is a comparatively simple matter to replace the original commentary with whatever language is native to the country in which the film is to be distributed. Social documentaries of the type of 'World of Plenty', on the problems of world food distribution, 'Children of the City', on child delinquency, instructional films for farmers, allotment keepers, doctors, have all been included in the films sent overseas. It has not therefore been a case of this country publicising itself; the functional aspect has remained uppermost. In America, for example, the films have been shown mainly through non-theatrical channels, to general and specialised audiences, and have had a great appeal.

At home the M O I has built up its own non-theatrical distribution, based on shows by mobile projection vans (which now number 144), shows in cinemas out of hours, and the free loan of films from the Central Film Library. These channels are also open to all Dominion and Allied Governments wishing to distribute official films in Britain. As a result several millions of people in this country have been able to see American, Russian, Canadian and other foreign documentary films for the first time. At present the Central Film Library contains 11 Russian films, most of them on the war, but including one on the 'Soviet School Child'; 30 American films, among them 'The City'

based on Mumford's book 'The Culture of Cities', agricultural films, 'Patterns of American Rural Art', and 5 films on American methods of ship-building; 30 Canadian films, among them 'Peoples' Bank', on the Credit Unions that have arisen in fishing, farming and mining communities in Canada, 'Partners in Production', on the joint production committees in Britain; 8 films made by the Polish Government and 2 from the Netherlands Information Bureau. The importance of the non-theatrical machinery of the M O I and its handling of foreign instructional films, as well as British, can be judged from the fact that in the year ending August 31st, 1944, it was estimated that it reached a total audience of some 18½ million people.

Since a National Film Board was set up in 1940 Canada has also become an important centre of documentary production, under its Film Commissioner, John Grierson. Several hundred films have been produced, and a non-theatrical machinery created similar to the M O I's and likewise handling foreign documentaries. Apart from non-theatrical films of the type already mentioned, the Board produces the series of films called 'World in Action', interpreting world news for cinema audiences in Canada and abroad. It is modelled on the American 'March of Time' and is issued monthly. It has included films on 'Inside Fighting China', 'Russia's Foreign Policy', 'Labour Front', etc. Films produced for non-theatrical audiences cover all aspects of Canadian life.

In the U S A there has not been the same coordination of official production. The Department of Agriculture, the Office of Education have produced a number of films, some of which have been shown abroad. But the main production and distribution of films specifically for foreign countries is in the hands of the Office of War Information (O W I) and the Office of Inter-American Affairs (O I A A). The overseas branch of the O W I, which covers countries outside the Americas, had by the end of 1944 acquired 25 and produced 19 documentaries for showing overseas. It had also issued seven 20-minute short films called U S A Screen Magazines. The O I A A, created in 1940 to promote a 'Good Neighbour' policy between the Americas, has used films extensively. Up to the end of 1944, 400 different subjects had been released in South America, with commentaries in Spanish and Portuguese. Most of these films have been acquired and do not appear to be of high quality. Sponsorship of new productions has been limited, though it includes farming and health films, and a programme of films, intended for Latin American medical students, on the techniques employed by leading U S Surgeons. All these films have been shown non-theatrically either by using existing facilities in the countries concerned, or by employing mobile projection units, 300 of which are now in operation in the Latin American republics. At the same time the O I A A has distributed films about South America to non-theatrical audiences in the U S A.

In Russia, because the film industry is State-run, and the film, as such, regarded as an important propaganda instrument, there has never been the same division between feature and documentary film for example, nor between theatrical and non-theatrical distribution. The early masterpieces 'The Battleship Potemkin', 'Turksib', 'The Earth', which in fact contributed a great deal to the development of the documentary film in Britain, combined dramatisation with the realistic depiction of actual events. They were designed to be shown anywhere where there was a projector available, in the cinema or outside it. In addition large numbers of technical and scientific films have been made for use in schools and institutes. Some of these instructional films have been introduced into other countries, particularly since 1941. In Britain, for example, the Soviet Film Agency and the Society for Cultural Relations in the U S S R now holds well over a hundred films of this kind, available on loan. But there has not been the same organisation, as in

Britain, Canada and the U.S.A., for the distribution of films abroad and the handling of foreign films in Russia. Although far more Russian films have been available abroad, the Russians themselves appear to have relied mainly on feature length films, like 'Battle for the Ukraine', about the war on the Eastern Front to represent their country and people abroad.

There has also been a certain amount of documentary production in India by the Government of India's Film Unit, in New Zealand and by film units attached to one or two of the Allied Governments in Britain. Production of training films for the various fighting Services in different Allied countries has been even more extensive than production by civilian film departments. But the actual interchange of films has been by no means as large, partly of course because of differences in methods of training, etc.

### RESULTS OF WARTIME INNOVATIONS

The vastly increased production and distribution of official films during the war has several important new characteristics. For the first time films are circulating freely between countries, without the cumbersome mediation of an international convention. Doctors in different countries, and farmers and factory workers, have been able to communicate indirectly with each other, through one of the greatest of all mass-media, on matters relating to their work. This exchange of technical information of specialised interest to particular groups in different countries is capable of extension to cover all common interests, provided the bodies and organisations concerned are willing to take the initiative. U.N.R.R.A. has a film department, and has begun to use films, not nearly enough, but it has started. The I.L.O., the World T.U.C., can speak to all workers on certain points of common interest arising out of similar employment, or like problems. The success in the composition of the M.O.I. film, 'Silent Village', about the fate of the Czech mining village of Lidice, reconstructed in a mining village in Wales, is an example of how this common appeal can be made even broader. It is not merely a new method of mining coal which may interest miners in different parts of the world, in their professional capacity; it is not merely conditions of work under different types of ownership; but the whole character which a mining town acquires and which distinguishes its inhabitants. Before the war much of the cultural and scientific exchange arranged on an international level, through the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation and like bodies, was between a limited number of people, who by education and interest already shared a common tradition and were fully conscious of the fact. The advent of the film as one of the great media of mass-communication and the work of documentary film-makers in different countries have made it possible to extend this exchange to the generality of people, who are not consciously aware of common traditions and common problems.

To a large extent these documentary achievements, though educational in aim, have been outside formal education. Educationalists, particularly in Britain, have been reluctant to make use of the film's power to influence and slow to realise the need for using it as an aid to teaching, instead of leaving it as a counter-attraction or even as an impediment, which is very much the case with the average film in the ordinary cinema. Films have nevertheless been made specifically for classroom teaching by commercial firms such as Gaumont British Instructional in Britain, makers of the well known 'Secrets of Life' films, by Eastman Kodak and E.R.P.I. in the U.S.A., by U.F.A. in Germany, etc., but too few of them were shown before the war outside their country of origin. The League of Nations Convention of 1933 applied to films of this kind, but as they were commercial productions made on a profit-making basis, they enjoyed no official assistance. But since the war and the setting up of the

Inter-Allied Education Conference in London, the Conference's Audio-Visual Aids Commission, set up to enquire into the international uses of such aids as films, has endeavoured to view and select teaching films produced in different countries. The intention has been to make suitable films available to the various Allied Education Departments and to enable them to overcome some of the educational difficulties created in their devastated countries, by using films and other aids to assist teachers. This Conference has drawn up plans for an International Institute of Education, which would presumably include a visual education department.

The immediate uses to which films, particularly documentary films, can be put are various and important. It is essential that the wartime exchange developed between America, Britain, Canada, and to a lesser extent Russia, be extended to cover as many countries as possible, particularly those that have been recently liberated. This film exchange, like many other arrangements and agreements of the past five years was developed under the urgent pressure of war. But there are other needs as urgent and there are audiences in schools and halls of every kind in other countries who will be interested in the present problems of rehabilitation, housing, health, education, etc. This non-theatrical audience is capable of the same extension in Europe as has taken place in Britain, U S A and Canada, particularly as the Germans have given unwitting material assistance. They used films extensively in these countries for propaganda and it was found after they retreated in the west that in France, Belgium and Holland they had left behind them thousands of 16mm projectors. It is estimated that 10,000 communities in France will now have weekly non-theatrical showings, of films supplied partly by the O W I and M O I.

At a time when materials of all kinds are in such desperately short supply, and when shipping space and transport are limited, a few prints of a film can cover a country quickly and effectively taking up little space to transport. But it is equally important that as soon as possible similar films produced in France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, etc., should receive non-theatrical distribution in this and other countries which have been responsible for the bulk of the documentary films produced over the past five years. The emphasis must be on reciprocity, which is the main guarantee of the films' value and impartiality. Obviously it is undesirable for S H A E F, O W I, M O I, or any other *ad hoc* wartime organisation of this kind to decide what films other countries are to receive. National film departments, producing films and maintaining non-theatrical distribution machinery, will be essential to the operation of future exchange schemes. They already exist in Canada, Russia, Britain, the U S A, they are projected in other countries. But some International Film Office is obviously required to act as a clearing house for all the films available. The United Nations Information Organisation (U N I O), which has operated since 1942, has a Films Division situated in the U S A. This Division has published an annual catalogue 'The United Nations in Films', listing 354 films from 37 countries. It has also arranged programmes of foreign films for showing in schools, libraries, etc., in the U S A. This body may develop into the kind of going concern that is needed to stimulate international film exchange on the widest possible scale. It is nevertheless the responsibility of the major producing countries, particularly Britain, which has been the pioneer in documentary production and use, to maintain and increase the circulation of films achieved during the war on subjects of world-wide importance and application.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sources of information on international film developments of this kind are few. Periodicals like *Documentary News Letter*, *Sight and Sound*, the American *Film News* and *Educational Screen*, the Canadian *National Film Board News* are useful. The Report on *The Factual Film in Britain*, sponsored by the Dartington Hall Trustees and to be published shortly, surveys developments in this country.

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

## **WHAT THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION COULD DO**

by Peter Self

Few people doubt that the present patchwork of local government areas needs to be redrawn. The case for reform was strong before the war, but the heavy new responsibilities which reconstruction legislation will put on local authorities makes it much stronger. If nothing or little is done, the only way to efficient administration may be through the creation of many more *ad hoc* boards for special purposes, elected indirectly or not at all ; or, worse still, through the gradual taking over of local functions by the central Government. This is a prospect which calls for clear thinking and quick action by all who believe that democracy begins at home, in the Town Hall—and especially by Fabians, who cherished and nurtured local government in its infancy.

The best way might be to make a clean break with the present complex and entangled system and create new regional and sub-regional units. The Coalition Government decided, however, to keep the existing administrative structure and reform it. Parliament, before dissolving, passed an Act which sets up a Boundary Commission with power to regroup authorities and to redraw their areas. A Labour Government might wish to reverse this decision. But it is in any case well worth seeing what reforms can be made within the existing system. Public administration in England has too pragmatic and evolutionary a character to take very kindly to the idea of a complete clean sweep. The aim of this article is to show what changes a progressive and powerful Boundary Commission could make inside the present system.

Indeed, the Commission already has powers in theory to remould the system as it pleases, granted only that it keeps the same *types* and the same *hierarchy*—counties, county boroughs, municipal boroughs, urban and rural districts—of authorities. It can abolish or amalgamate any authorities, as well as alter their areas. In reply to a question in the Commons, it was made clear that the Commission could—this time, very much in theory—create one authority for Tyneside by a process of extinguishing all but one of the authorities there. In practice, the Commission's pace will be set by the 'general directions' which are to be given it by the Minister of Health, and the Minister is unlikely to encourage any strong action unless he has first sought Parliament's approval. It seems at present intended to keep the Commission a very mild affair, which will chiefly live down to its name by merely changing boundaries, at any rate as far as the larger authorities are concerned. But it is not too late to turn it into a valuable instrument of reform, if bold 'directions' are given it and broad-minded men appointed to sit on it.

## **AN UNPROFITABLE CONFLICT**

The main defect of the present system is that there are too many of the larger authorities, counties and county boroughs, for modern administrative needs. It is not necessary to point to the well-known extremes and anachronisms—Lancashire County with 1,898,000 and Rutland County with 18,000, Birmingham County Borough with 1,053,000 and Chester County Borough with 44,000—in order to see this. It is enough to remember that even Mr. Willink regards 100,000 population as a bare minimum, and 125,000 as a desirable

minimum for new county boroughs, and to reflect that nearly half of the existing county boroughs fall short of this bare minimum. Again, one-fifth of existing counties contain less than 100,000 people and, owing to their poverty and their lack of cohesion, many other counties are too small for their functions. It is not too much to say that between one-third and one-half of the present counties and county boroughs are ill-suited to run health, education, town planning and other services on an adequate scale, and are too poor to afford a fully efficient and specialised staff.

But administrative needs are, after all, only one side of the picture. The situation is best looked at, not in terms of technical deficiencies, but of a struggle between counties and county boroughs for '*lebensraum*'. Both sides are thwarted because there is not space or population enough in the country for all the existing authorities to comprise satisfactory units. Every creation of a new county borough or extension of an old one reduces the size, population, and rateable value of some county. Probably too many county boroughs (61) were created in the first place, and their number has been increased since then to 83. It is small wonder that the 61 counties, which have lost some 2 million of their total population since 1888, have strongly opposed this process. They have managed to halt it somewhat since 1926, the year when all county borough changes were made dependent on private Act of Parliament. But the only result is that, as is freely admitted, some county boroughs have now accumulated an overwhelming case for extending their boundaries. County boroughs will continue to expand, and counties will be forced to shrink, until the total number of both is drastically reduced. Clearly, much larger units are wanted now than in 1888, yet the average size of major authorities is actually smaller—and it was small enough then.

## THE DANGER FOR URBAN PLANNING

The proper planning of Britain's cities is next to impossible under present conditions. The size of most towns is growing much faster than their population. Modern facilities of transport and communications, and modern ideas of health and amenity, have continued to spread their populations over a progressively wider area. Local government units have been enlarged haltingly and reluctantly, and never sufficiently to keep pace with the outward flow of population and industry. The upshot is that many county boroughs now administer no more than the older and more central part of their towns, leaving the surrounding suburbs to be controlled from one or more county capitals which may be a long way off.

A town's planning scheme should cover the area of its potential growth, and the opportunity for replanning the 'blitzed' cities which is now offered has brought the administrative dilemma to a head. County boroughs, such as Hull, Southampton and Plymouth, cannot rebuild their cities on more spacious lines and at lower densities, without losing a large quantity of their population and rateable value. They are faced with the paradox that the better they plan, the worse off they will be. But quite apart from the financial maladjustment which could with difficulty be smoothed out by special legislation, it is far from satisfactory that many county boroughs should need to carry out half or more of their rehousing outside their own areas. Such a situation can only lead to the creation of St. Heliers and Becontrees on a far larger scale—housing estates, whose services are provided by several different authorities, acting at different times and with inadequate liaison, with the result that they lack any communal focus or adequate local employment.

To build new centres with a life and work of their own requires the guiding hand of a single authority. The White Paper on local government recognises that the 'overspill' areas, into which county boroughs decant their surplus

population, should be annexed to the county borough *before* building commences. Even the acceptance of this welcome idea would be insufficient. The most suitable 'overspill' areas may be located some distance from the parent authority—under present conditions, they may even be separated from it by suburbs and a 'green belt'. To add on these 'islands' of territory to their parent county borough would not secure the co-ordinated growth of the city as a whole, in which housing, industry, transport, open spaces, and agriculture need to be allocated and developed in conjunction. The centre, the suburbs, the green belt, and any new 'satellite' towns should all be planned by the same authority, not by several authorities, let alone, as sometimes happens now, by a dozen or two dozen of them.

Planning—and financial—needs require that some county boroughs should be considerably enlarged. There is no way out through creating joint planning committees, unless they are made compulsory and armed with strong executive powers (two difficult and unlikely steps). Some extension of county borough boundaries is inevitable—let it not be done half-heartedly.

### RURAL AND SUBURBAN APATHY

So much for the county boroughs. What of the counties, who under these suggestions will shrink further and be stripped of more of their richest areas? Reform would, of course, be a sham, if it left rural areas in a still worse state than they are at present. The first step must be to amalgamate some of the smaller counties and those which will shrivel up owing to the expansion of county boroughs. But this by itself will do nothing to cure the financial poverty and political backwardness of many counties. The only way to overcome these disadvantages and to obtain a better balance between town and country is to reduce a number of county boroughs in status and to put them back as the heart and centre of rural counties.

Local loyalties must be heeded as well as administrative needs, but fortunately they point in much the same direction. The alarming lack of interest in county council elections is largely due to the fact that many counties have become a mixture of countryside and suburb. The countryside is dominated by large landowners and farmers, since agricultural workers, besides being more politically inarticulate than other groups, have not the time, money, or freedom to attend council meetings. The suburbs have naturally far more interest in the town of which they are an offshoot than in a county with whose affairs they have little in common. Counties would gain enormously if they could draw on a wider range of occupational classes, such as are found in most medium-sized industrial towns. Democracy can only thrive in the counties, if there is a strong leaven of urban interest. Surely this would be far better provided by, for instance, giving back to the county of Devon its capital Exeter, than by letting it keep its control over the suburbs of Plymouth?

Interest in local government in the larger towns would gain equally if suburban residents, who are usually well educated and potentially responsible citizens, had a say in their administration. Far too many people, especially the wealthier classes, have come to work in one authority's area and to live and vote (if they vote at all) in another's. It is time that the unit of local government corresponded again more closely with the ambit of daily travel.

### THE SMALLER AUTHORITIES

So far the argument has been confined to the larger local authorities—counties and county boroughs. When the smaller local authorities—municipal or non-county boroughs, and urban and rural districts—are considered, the same rough needs and principles will be found to apply. But there is one

important difference. The reform of the smaller units is far less urgent and far easier to secure. The number of urban and rural districts was reduced by a third during the 1930's as a result of decisions of county councils made under the 1929 Act. True, the county councils were not allowed to touch municipal boroughs, but no such limitation applies to the Boundary Commission which will take over the review functions of the counties and which can change all areas, big and small.

The Boundary Commission will not find it very difficult to thin out still further the number of smaller authorities. Its decisions on this point are final, and unlike its decisions affecting major authorities do not need Parliament's approval. The main opposition in this field will come from municipal boroughs jealous of their ancient rights. Many of these may need to be extinguished; but many more should be enlarged. A small market town often contains two sets of officials—one set administering the borough itself, the other the surrounding rural district. This is the type of case where, as the White Paper recognised, town and country should be merged to form a better balanced unit.

## TWO-TIER COUNTY BOROUGHS?

If there are to be fewer and smaller county boroughs, the question will inevitably arise whether they should not, like the counties, delegate some of their functions to smaller bodies. This question has both a political and a general aspect. When county boroughs are extended to take in surrounding suburbs and, possibly, 'green belts' and satellite towns, they will absorb many municipal boroughs, urban districts, and even rural districts. Are these smaller authorities to be abolished entirely? They would offer much less opposition to the change if they were kept in existence and retained some of their functions. This could be done by merely transferring the powers which counties exercise in the areas of these smaller authorities to the enlarged county boroughs, with the addition of a broad control over town planning and housing.

Although this concession would smooth the path of reform, there is less to be said for it on theoretical grounds. It would extend the disadvantages of the two-tier system to county boroughs, who do not possess the large area and scattered population which justifies this system in the case of counties. It would also create the awkward question of whether the existing area of a large county borough as well as future additions should be split up into smaller units.

Many argue that county boroughs with over a million population are too big to capture the interest or understand the needs of their various localities. There is, certainly, a case for creating minor units inside a large county borough; but these bodies should not in any case be the same sort of size or have the same sort of powers as existing second-tier authorities. They should probably, for instance, be much smaller than the average municipal boroughs. It has been said that citizens today feel two local loyalties—one to the whole city of which they are a part, the other to their own very small corner of it. This idea has found expression in Moscow, where small 'departments', which correspond roughly to a 'neighbourhood unit' have important powers over housing and other matters. Whether or not it should be tried out here is outside the scope both of this discussion and of the Boundary Commission's powers.

## HOW TO RULE THE URBAN LEVIATHANS?

The worst muddle and confusion of local government areas exist in a few large conurbations which contain a third or half of the population of England and Wales. Several towns which were once distinct and separate are now

sometimes linked together in a more or less solid block of continuous development. These urban conglomerations should clearly at least be planned as a whole. Unfortunately they contain such a medley of authorities that to recast their administration along the simple lines so far suggested is very difficult.

The typical structure of these urban blocks is that of some large county borough, such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, or Newcastle, which is ringed around with a number of smaller county boroughs, while the intervening gaps and outlying suburbs are administered jointly by minor authorities and their superior counties. Administration of the densely populated area within a short radius of the centre of Birmingham, for instance, is in the hands of no less than 6 county boroughs, 3 counties, and numerous municipal boroughs and urban districts ; or again, as the Barlow Report pointed out, two urban blocks—one centred around Manchester and the other centred around Bradford and Leeds—contain some 50 local authorities each.

The only ultimate solution is, probably, the creation of a regional authority for each of the large conurbations. Ideally, existing local authorities would be regrouped so as to form satisfactory sub-divisions of it, and the distribution of functions between the regional and the lesser authorities would be thought out anew. But ideas of this kind are largely speculative as far as immediate reform is concerned. In one or two cases, the Boundary Commission *might* succeed in expanding a large county borough sufficiently to make it the nucleus of a genuine regional authority. But for the most part the best that can be hoped of the Commission is that it will reduce the present number of major authorities—for instance, by amalgamating two or more county boroughs and their surrounding smaller authorities.

All such reforms would point in the right direction, and the work is none the less valuable for being piecemeal. In fact, considerable variation in the needs and sentiments of different districts is a characteristic of English local government. The position on Tyneside is not the same as that on Merseyside—and no set pattern of organisation can be applied, unmodified, to every part of the country. This article has tried to set out some of the main principles which should be observed if local government is to be flourishing and efficient. But their detailed working out depends upon local circumstances, which require local investigation. This is the advantage of the Boundary Commission which can—indeed must—proceed locally and empirically, case by case. Even if it is unable to take important decisions itself, it should at least clear the ground for them to be taken in the near future.

The general direction reform should take is, however, clear enough and hardly disputable. Local authorities should be large enough to run their respective services efficiently and economically ; they should be the right size to create and to retain local interest and active citizenship and, partly in order to do so, they should contain a wide range of social and occupational classes and strike a satisfactory balance between town and country ; they should be as well-balanced financially as possible ; and they should be (again as far as possible) adequate units for the co-ordinated planning of their physical development. Not all of these conditions can be fully satisfied ; a balance has always to be struck between them. To realise some of them properly, the structure of local government may have to be changed—for instance, regional planning coupled with local administration may be the best way to control and co-ordinate physical development. But it can at least be said that every one of these principles of reform requires that there should be fewer and bigger major authorities. This may eventually require some form of regionalism. In the meantime, there is everything to be gained from evolving better balanced counties and county boroughs.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## COLONIAL.

**FABIAN COLONIAL ESSAYS**, edited by Rita Hinden (Allen and Unwin 8/6)

Five and a half years of war, which has both sharpened the social conscience and disclosed the complexity of social problems to those fighting against the cheap, swift and brutal methods of social organisation which we call Fascism, have not been without their effects on thought about colonial problems. Not so very long ago a perusal of Mr. Horrabin's mordant analysis of the Empire 'founded in a fit of absence of mind'—which he exposes rather as a history of grabbing timed admirably to suit the strategic and economic needs of Great Britain as they occurred in time, without necessarily formulating the philosophy even to ourselves<sup>1</sup>—combined with Dr. Hinden's and Mr. Brailsford's, devastating account of the poverty of Africa and the extent to which this is due to the huge tribute which African soil, resources and labour have been paid directly to the Western whites, would have been sufficient indictment and we could have answered boldly: 'We have repented of our sins, and we will let the people go'. Now we know that it is not so easy, that we cannot simply repent and turn the cage-birds loose into the jungle which we ourselves, acting in our capacity as agents of higher civilisation, have made. We cannot put back the clock or the lands and minerals we have stolen or the ways of living we have shattered; nor can we trust to easy formulae of internationalism; we have to face a far more difficult and responsible task in making good the aims of our forefathers. (It was Shaw and the Webbs who pointed out that neither crying 'To hell with Kruger' nor 'Stop the Boer War' did anything to help the *majority* of the inhabitants of South Africa; for their insight they were denounced as imperialists.) Some of the new difficulties appear even in this book, in which Miss Margaret Wrong sets a goal of literacy whose usefulness seems very doubtful to Mr. Furnivall and the anthropologist, Dr. Fortes, questions the validity of the self-government at which most of the other essayists are aiming.

Such disagreements as these underline the statement in the introduction that this is not a new *Fabian Essays*, putting forward a clear and agreed policy as did the 1889 volume; it is a group of individual contributions by individual authors who have in general much of a common outlook. Outstanding among the essays are, for trenchant restatement of the problem, Brailsford's brilliant *Socialists and the Empire*, Horrabin and Hinden, already mentioned, and Leonard Woolf's claim for political self-government and not any base version of it cooked up, whether by anthropologists or 'community' advocates, as suitable for hewers of wood and drawers of water; for treatment of a particular subject, Margaret Wrong's chapter on Literacy; Furnivall's disquieting series of questions based on Far Eastern experience; and Dr. Fortes's *Anthropologist's Point of View*, which should be read very carefully, in spite of the cold water it pours on the aspirations of the rest. In the other essays there is much that is interesting, the greatest gap being on the side of economic development, which is stressed in Brailsford's essay, but hardly mentioned elsewhere. One would have liked some clearer guidance either on how to give the Africans, like the Usbekis, some economic basis on which to build a united civilisation, or on how to deal with the uncrowned kings of African economy, such as the United Africa Company.

There is a short concluding chapter on 'Colonies and World Order,' which makes some mild and cautious suggestions. Under present conditions and the present state of thought the caution is probably inevitable. But it does suggest that

<sup>1</sup> It may be this sort of non-formulation, in reverse, which Sir Drummond Sheil's essay has in mind in saying that 'this disparity (between ideals and performance) has not been due to insincerity . . . but to a certain characteristic national time-lag between intention and action'. It is not, however, a very cogent defence.

the reference on page 14 to 'escapism into the philosophy of Lenin' is hardly just. Several of the contributors make laudatory reference to the Soviet treatment of backward peoples—but this surely had its foundation on the philosophy of Lenin and of Stalin? Do we perhaps need some more philosophizing?

M. I. C.

### **PROPOSALS FOR THE REVISION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NIGERIA (Cmd. 6599) H M S O 3d.**

These proposals have been framed with three objects in view—to promote the unity of Nigeria; to provide within that unity for all the diverse elements and to secure greater participation by Africans in the discussion of their own affairs. To achieve these ends, it is proposed not only to widen the scope and membership of the Central Legislative Council, but to establish separate regional councils in the Northern, Western and Eastern Provinces. In each of these councils there is to be an African majority of one, the Africans in some few cases to be directly elected but the majority to be selected or nominated. In the Regional Councils the African members will be nominated by the Native authorities; and from among these nominees representatives will be selected for the Central Legislative Council. The functions of the Legislative Council are to be the same as before.

The first obvious criticism of these proposals is that no link is yet created between the Legislative and Executive authority. The beginnings of a ministerial system cannot now be long delayed, and it is good to notice therefore the proposal that the Constitution should be reviewed after nine years. Another criticism is that the bare majority of one African in each council savours of niggardliness. The Gold Coast proposals were more generous than these. In some instances, the African members include government nominated Chiefs, so that, in the eyes of Africans, the majority is a pseudo-majority only. Why was it necessary to bring so many officials and technical heads of departments on to the Council? In the Gold Coast this was avoided, the departmental heads being invited only for advice and information, and not having a vote. There are also other less complex criticisms. Voting for the Legislative Council is made dependent on an income of £100. Why? This provision has been scrapped in the Gold Coast constitutional proposals. Why, too, should the further development of democratic municipal councils be so definitely ruled out? We learn that the proposals have already been accepted by the present Nigerian Legislative Council with its unrepresentative minority African membership. We trust that this will not preclude some obvious improvements being introduced before these proposals are finally adopted.

R. H.

### **INDUSTRIAL.**

#### **RECONSTRUCTION IN THE POTTERY INDUSTRY** National Society of Pottery Workers (Co-operative Printing Society Ltd., New Mount Street, Manchester 4 Price 6d.)

The Report on the Pottery Industry published by the United States Department of Commerce in 1915 quoted a leading English manufacturer as saying: 'I firmly believe that in the whole of the Staffordshire district over 60% of the potteries ought to be scrapped and modern works put up'. The situation today is probably even more chronic.

To deal with this situation the National Society of Pottery Workers has produced a most able and, in many respects, remarkable document. It is entirely lacking in any Trade Union sectional approach and is thoroughly realistic. Nationalisation is the long-term goal but it is recognised that in the immediate future there is very little prospect of nationalisation. Consequently a short-term policy of public controls is advocated and stated in great detail. This policy is to be found in the section headed 'A plan for reconstruction' and involves amongst other things, the setting up of a Pottery Advisory Board, the continuation of the Licensing system (with variations), financial assistance for rebuilding and Government bulk buying. There are also sections on the

Export Trade, Wages, Health Regulations, the Forty Hour Week, Apprenticeship, the Status of Women, Welfare and Management. The Report closes with a concise summary of the proposals.

R. S. J.

**INDUSTRIAL RECORD 1919-39** Published by Cadbury Brothers, 1945 8/6

As the title implies, this book gives the history of the Cadbury firm between the two wars. It covers chiefly the mechanisation of the industry; its revision of transport; a study of market conditions, and finally its enlightened Labour Policy. It shows how, as a result of these factors, seasonal variations in demand could be evened out without any serious alterations in staffing. Finally, it criticises heavily the wastefulness of distribution costs, showing what a high percentage goes in this direction. These are its good points; its chief defect is that there is no comparison with similar industries, and one feels that, successful as this project is, it rather presupposes the reforming zeal of a 'Cadbury' at the top.

R. D.

**MANAGEMENT IN RUSSIAN INDUSTRY AND AGRICULTURE** by  
Bienstock, Schwarz and Yugow Oxford University Press, New York \$3.00

This is the first of the studies of the Institute of World Affairs of the New School for Social Research in New York. It is a first class fully documented study of the history, present status, training and incentives of Soviet Industrial and Agricultural managers. The relations of management to the higher authorities, to the Communist Party and to the Trade Unions, which have undergone radical changes since the revolution, are described. The methods of control of the efficiency of management, with some description of the principles underlying price fixing are included. Some interesting figures are given showing the changing composition of the Communist Party and the increasing proportion of its membership drawn from the ranks of the technicians as compared with the manual workers. An indispensable book for the understanding of present day Russian social relations.

A. A.

**SOCIAL AND POLITICAL.**

**NATION AND FAMILY** by Alva Myrdal (Routledge 21/-)

The general thesis of Fru. Myrdal's book is that a population policy can be nothing less than a social policy at large. The problem, she believes, will in the near future be brought into the political foreground. All the social and economic problems centring around the family institution, and the quantity and quality of population, will gradually assume a dominant position, and a new interest will attach to productive investment in a nation's chief economic asset—children and their health and capabilities.

There is, however, need for a new approach to the problem. The very phrase 'population policy' connotes to the lay mind—and sometimes also to the population expert—nothing more than one contrivance or another for controlling migration or encouraging child-bearing; and controversy has turned around isolated points, such as the case for or against birth control. One side has stressed *quantity* only, the other *quality*. Neither school has been able to broaden its views enough to comprehend the social dynamics that are much more responsible for the spread of birth control than doctrines and propaganda. The individual today, under democratic influence, is too cognisant of his own identity and interests to forfeit the right to serve his own welfare in what touches him so intimately as the size of the family. The gospel of birth control has already been adopted in the western democracies to such an extent that rapid depopulation is threatening. Unfortunately, it is much more difficult—though more rational and promising for the future—to remake society so that it fits the children, than to abolish the children in order to fit society.

The population crisis, indeed, is only the external aspect of what is really a crisis in the family as an institution. Most fundamental is the change in the economic function. The family was once the main unit of economic produc-

tion, independent and self-sustaining in a sense now largely forgotten. Today the economic unit tends to comprise the whole national economy, and marriage and family are as yet poorly adjusted to the new economic order. Unproductive age-groups have no assured place in a society based on individualistic money-making in nation-wide competitive markets. Nor is it without significance that in all systems of social security the periods of illness, unemployment and old age tend to be provided for long before there is any recognition of the need to provide for the period of unproductive childhood. The neglect can be justified only from the viewpoint of extreme individualism. Childhood could be prevented by the expedient of not bearing children, while the other conditions of need are more unavoidable. The logic of the position is that the individual family has unconditional responsibility for its own children. In retrospect, it is hard to understand how the fate of the family under the impact of the industrial revolution should have passed almost without notice during the nineteenth century. The task of the present generation is to re-integrate the family in the larger society.

Dr. Myrdal describes in detail the Swedish experiment in a democratic family and population. The chapters cover a wide field from 'Planning the Size of the Family', 'Proposals for Child-bearing', or 'Economics of Home-making', to 'Housing for Families', 'Feeding a Nation' and 'Opportunities of Education'. Not the least interesting chapter is that on 'One Sex a Social Problem', or the dual function of women. Traditional thinking, Dr. Myrdal points out, is enmeshed in an accumulation of vague interests, confused emotions and pure nonsense. Far back in time, more especially in an agrarian society, it was never prescribed that men should be the earners and women the home-makers, or that men should be the workers and women the non-workers. The present family ideology—the duty of the husband to support the family, the duty of the wife to stay at home—dates from the industrial revolution and is already out of tune with the times. Much of the routine work of the home is being gradually absorbed by industry, leaving house-work increasingly in the position of involving mere preparation for use of finished or semi-finished products instead of manufacture. A large number of women are gainfully occupied before marriage, and the economic irrationality of not using productive resources, often invested with costly training, is obvious. There is a further danger that, despite all economic equalisation for children, the whole population programme may fail because married women are fundamentally dissatisfied with the status defined for them. Dr. Myrdal's book is a masterly analysis of a vital and complex problem and gives to it a new perspective. No serious student of population questions can afford to ignore it.

B. D.

**THE QUESTION OF POPULATION : EUROPE IN 1870** by L. J. Cadbury  
(News-Chronicle 6d.)

The pamphlet gives us a timely warning. Present population trends in Europe lead us to expect increasing populations in the South and East and declining ones in the North and West. Great Britain can be taken as typical of the second group. If events are allowed to take their course unchecked, dangerous internal conditions will arise to jeopardise European peace.

B. D.

**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF POPULATION** by Radhakamal Mukerjee  
(Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd. 16/-)

This important work represents a new outlook on population. The Malthusian picture, as the writer points out, of the normal structure of society, as that of a rich, directive class subsisting on the toil of a teeming population, subjected to the checks of starvation and epidemics is partial and misleading. Social stratification is governed by technology, culture and political factors. On the course of history an increase of population has had different consequences. Sometimes it has led to misery and destitution of the masses, which are bowed down by the weight of a rigid social system. Such misery has had a direct relation to the density of population. Sometimes it has encouraged adventure, migration and commerce of whole peoples. Often it has fostered new tech-

nical inventions and novel utilization of limited resources. Longevity, conservation, real income, employment, individual happiness and national security, are the criterion, the writer considers, by which to measure optimum population at any point in time and place.

B. D.

**POPULATION FACTS AND POLICIES** by Eva M. Hubback (Allen and Unwin 2/6)

The pamphlet makes an admirable survey of facts and policies. There is little doubt, the writer concludes, that the startling reduction in the birthrate since 1875 is due to an immense growth in voluntary family restriction. 'From having been a forced levy, children have now become a voluntary contribution'. To this problem of a declining population the writer sees no easy solution. In order to reverse present trends, we must create a new public opinion, and large families be regarded, not as an occasion for sympathy, or a music-hall joke, but as a matter of pride. We must at the same time reduce economic handicaps on marriage and parenthood. This means cash payments, such as marriage grant, maternity benefit, and children's allowances, the latter being merged in a recast system of children's rebates on income-tax. It means improved housing and children's rent rebates, and the development of free or subsidised social services affecting mothers and children.

B. D.

**HOSPITAL SURVEY—THE HOSPITAL SERVICES OF LONDON AND THE SURROUNDING AREA** (HMSO 10/-)

The authors of this survey, which was commissioned by the Minister of Health in 1941, deserve our thanks for a thorough job carried out with impartiality. They review in their introduction the work and deficiencies of voluntary and local authority hospitals alike. Two interesting points emerge—the 'typical' voluntary hospital, even in the London area, is the small 'cottage' hospital, staffed by G.P.'s and without effective specialist staff—and lack of co-ordination is just as marked a fault in local authority hospital services as in voluntary hospitals.

The problem of the chronic sick is analysed with far greater thoroughness than it usually gets. Useful proposals are made for improving this much-neglected area of health work.

The medical staffing is treated with the care it deserves and the authors give a not entirely undeserved warning to the planners of future health services, that 'a good hospital consists primarily of an expert medical and nursing staff' and not merely 'a modern and fully equipped building'. They show clearly from the facts the bad effects in the past of the concentration of specialists in central London 'for largely economic reasons' and they make useful suggestions for decentralisation.

The statistical tables provide much information that has never been available before, especially regarding the medical and nursing staffs of all types of hospitals. Tables showing the geographical distribution of the patients of each hospital make an unanswerable case for revision of hospital areas, both by voluntary and local authority hospitals. Present boundaries and siting of hospitals are as bad as one would expect from the haphazard growth of health services.

If you like statistics, you will revel in this Survey. If you do not, you will still find it the most interesting attempt yet at planning a hospital service on a large scale and in close contact with details and facts.

H. R.

**BATTLE FOR HEALTH** by Stephen Taylor (Nicholson and Watson 5/-)

First in a series entitled 'The New Democracy', this account of our existing public health services comes from the pen of a doctor recently on the staff of the Ministry of Information and thus well equipped to cover the subject. With the aid of lavish illustrations, including Isotype charts, he essays to initiate the layman into some of the technical aspects of preventable disease. The writing is not always tactful, but much may be forgiven to one attempting

difficult and necessary task, and one hopes that Dr. Taylor's example will lead other experts to draw still further aside the veil of mystery which, to some extent deliberately, has tended to be placed between the medical profession and the public it must serve.

B. C. T.

**THERE'S WORK FOR ALL** Michael Young and Theodor Prager (Nicholson and Watson 5/-)

The second volume in this series shows how much more difficult its technique of production is to handle than would appear from Dr. Taylor's Battle for Health. Dr. Taylor has envisaged his visual and printed material as a whole and wove them together into a masterly presentation of his case. Messrs. Young and Prager have not been so successful. Their charts (which are rather on the difficult side) are scattered about the book without any relation to their place in the argument, and many of the illustrations seem purposeless. It is difficult, for example, to see what a picture of a housewife hanging out the washing, or of an ENSA Concert, or of a factory worker gargling has to do with full employment. This is the more to be regretted because the subject of the text is difficult, the authors taking a wide range from the evils of unemployment to bogus cures, the White Paper, real cures and a long description of a Four Year Plan. All very useful and interesting but not very easy reading, and in my view not assisted by the presentation.

M. I. C.

**THE RE-HOUSING OF BRITAIN** by John Madge (Pilot Press 4/6)

'The Re-Housing of Britain' by John Madge is a very useful book on a current major problem and surveys the situation and the measures taken to deal with it during the past twenty-five years. There is a brief tabulation of statements on housing by the Conservative, Liberal, Labour and Communist parties, and there are 'flashes' of contemporary housing in England and abroad. The book ends with a practical six-point programme as a basis for national planning policy. As a reference book for those with an eye to the General Election it is extremely valuable.

J. K. H.

**THE LEWIS ASSOCIATION REPORTS No. 1** (Lewis Association)

This report is an extremely interesting example of a community enterprise. A group of public-spirited citizens on the island of Lewis formed, in January, 1943, the Lewis Association, its object being 'to survey and study the social and economic needs of the island of Lewis and to draw up progressive plans of development'. The foreword describes how the Association set to work—'At the inaugural meeting three standing Committees were formed—an Executive Committee to control the general business of the Association; an Economic Committee to consider the island's economic problems; and a Committee on Social Questions to consider the improvement of the island's social services... The technique which the Association has adopted is roughly that of a Royal Commission in which the people of Lewis are themselves the Commission'.

The Association is very modest in its claims and freely admits that drafting plans for social and economic improvement is the merest preliminary to having these plans put into effect. But it points out with justifiable satisfaction that the discussions have stimulated interest in the public affairs of the community and have had a continuous influence in forming and focussing public opinion. Many members of local public bodies have also been members of the Association. The scope of the report may be seen in its full title—'Report of the economic conditions of Lewis in 1938: with conclusions and interim recommendations, November, 1943'. It is divided into four sections:

- (a) Historical Background to the industries of Lewis.
- (b) The People (including population, vital and unemployment statistics).
- (c) The Industries.
- (d) Conclusion and interim Recommendations.

The material presented gives evidence of careful research and it is set out with admirable clarity. The proposals for future developments in Agriculture, Industry, Housing, Town Planning, Public Health, Education, etc., appear

to be both reasonable and practicable. If and when they are put into effect it seems likely that there will be a very considerable improvement in the social and economic conditions of Lewis. The report is pleasantly free from that form of local megalomania which sometimes mars otherwise praiseworthy local efforts.

R. B.

**REPORT ON RELATIONS BETWEEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE COMMUNITY (N A L G O 6d.)**

Government, like charity, begins at home. The postman and the dustman, the sanitary inspector and rate collector make their regular calls upon householders who, in general, have only the haziest idea as to what lies behind these official visitors. Local Government, in particular, touches the daily lives of all citizens at so many points that they cannot avoid being aware of it. Nevertheless there is a strong tendency to take all local services for granted and, in the manner of digestion, only become conscious of them if something goes wrong—if the dustman misses a week, or if there is a bad smell from the drains in the road. This little pamphlet, produced by N A L G O, shows that on the official side at least, they realise the existence of this gulf between services and citizens. It is the right and indeed the duty of every citizen to take part in the government of the community in which he lives. N A L G O emphasises the need for an active public relations policy on the part of all local authorities. They wish to establish 'not one-sided propaganda but a two-way bridge between the administrator and the citizen. The aims and policies methods, achievements and difficulties of the local authority must be explained to the citizen; and conversely the needs, wishes and complaints of the citizen explained to the local authority'. They make many practical recommendations as to the lines along which such a public relations policy might operate and the means for encouraging the growth of civic spirit and community pride among hitherto apathetic citizens.

R. B.

**THE CIVIL SERVICE : ITS PROBLEMS AND FUTURE** by E. N. Gladden  
(Staples 10/6)

Dr. Gladden has written an authoritative book which all Fabians interested in administration should read. The first part of his book deals with the history of the Civil Service and describes the existing methods of recruitment and organisation, the second with proposals for reform. Dr. Gladden upholds the method of recruitment by competitive examination at different stages of the educational ladder and would like to see the natural and social sciences given more weight. He suggests that adequate 'in training' should be given to all entrants. Part two outlines a scheme for dividing the service into two classes, with 50 % of the administrative class recruited from the university and 50% by promotion from within the service, and a new way of assessing seniority. The proposal for a Personnel Organisation Board within the service should appeal to many.

E. W. C.

**THE CHARACTER OF BRITISH DEMOCRACY** by A. K. White (Long and Wilson 4/6)

An elementary description of how British 'Liberal democracy' works. The author, who is an individualist, describes and defends all aspects of British democratic government, including the existence of privileged groups and the present distribution of wealth. He values government by discussion and shows the importance of the ability to compromise. Despite the determination of the author to find that nothing needs altering, this book might be useful for discussions in the top standards of senior schools.

E. W. C.

**THE METHODOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES** by Felix Kaufman.  
(Oxford \$3.50)

Not a book for Fabians. Nor for social scientists in general. A few post-graduate specialists in sociological method might care to examine it. Main

interest is that even as specialised and pedestrian a study as this can command backing of funds and allocation of paper and printing labour in the year 1944—reason being that it is American. Specific criticisms :—(a) it is only concerned with the 'logic', e.g., with deductive method; it hasn't a word to say about field-work and its significance for anthropology and sociology; Beatrice Webb and her great experiment in social research are not mentioned at all; (b) It is full of jargon, e.g., 'In view of this we are confronted with the problem of discovering elements that are invariant with respect to changes in environmental conditions and differences in the sensory organisation of different persons'. Why not say 'Our job is therefore to find out which things remain the same in spite of changes in the environment and the fact that people feel differently about the same thing'?

D. M. S.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN S.E. EUROPE (P E P 10/6)**

This is an investigation by a group of experts into economic conditions in S.E. Europe and Poland and into the steps that should be taken to build up a prosperous economy throughout the area. The subject is dealt with under six headings :—Nutrition, Food and Agriculture, Industrial Development, Transport, Marketing, Financial Aspects. The studies indicate that regional co-ordination is needed in certain directions notably in transport, marketing, investment and hydroelectric development. This book is a compact volume of 165 pages, includes 113 tables giving relevant statistical information. Much of it is not readily available elsewhere, and for this reason it should prove additionally valuable.

O. A.

#### **WORLD WAR : ITS CAUSE AND CURE by Lionel Curtis (Oxford University Press 7/6)**

This book is a digest of four pamphlets published by the author between 1941 and 1943, in which he stated his views on the causes of international conflict and the urgent necessity for avoiding future wars. It is a thoughtful and carefully documented work. Few readers will disagree with his thesis that only in a world secure from the imminent threat of war is social progress possible. They may be less inclined to agree with the solution which he puts—something in the nature of a very gradualist approach to a variant of Federal Union. But the author freely admits that he is not attempting to put forward a panacea for all current problems but simply seeking around for some reasonable means of removing the menace of war.

R. B.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS.**

#### **VISIONS AND MEMORIES by H. W. Nevinson (Oxford University Press 10/6)**

Nevinson reveals himself in these essays as a person, widely traversed physically, mentally and spiritually, who was capable of seeing most sides of many things. His teleology was that of tolerance. Some of the essays shed an interesting light on recent and present politics; his sidelights on Greece are most apposite.

R. O. R.

#### **TO START YOU TALKING : AN EXPERIMENT IN BROADCASTING (Pilot Press 6/-)**

The series of broadcasts about which this book is written were frankly dull. They left an impression that severe censorship had been exercised, and that very little of a controversial nature had escaped the blue pencil. It is all the more surprising therefore that this little book is so entertaining. There is a distinct fascination in discovering the detailed technique by which a series of broadcasts with a serious objective is gradually moulded into shape. Most people just beginning to take an interest in Youth Discussion Groups and out of school education will find it useful as well as enjoyable reading.

L. B.

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